

ABERCARN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report

OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
AND
SANITARY INSPECTOR
for the Year 1942.

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

Chairman of the Council ... Councillor T. J. Jenkins, J.P.

Councillor			NORTH WARD		
A. E. Jones			J. Ford		G. H. Miles
			SOUTH WARD		
F. Edwards			J. Davies		L. James
			EAST WARD		
R. Lewis			R. Morris		F. Salvage
			WEST WARD		
J. Games			T. M. Edwards		D. J. Williams
			TORLAIS WARD		
T. J. Jenkins			D. C. Evans		(Mrs.) M. A. Matthews
			CENTRAL WARD		
H. T. Williams			F. R. Dunford		J. O. Edwards

OFFICERS.

Clerk and Accountant	...	...	Leon King
Engineer and Surveyor	...	...	Malcolm T. Benjamin, B.Sc.
Deputy Engineer and Surveyor	...	...	Edmund G. Jenkins
Medical Officer of Health	...	...	Dr. J. Dunlop
Sanitary Inspector	...	...	Ivor Jenkins
Valuation Officer	...	...	C. Knight

The Surgery,
ABERCARN.
23rd April, 1943.

Mr. Chairman, Madam, and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the Year 1942.

The Report is substantially curtailed and only the essential statistics and information has been included owing to war-time restrictions.

STATISTICS OF THE DISTRICT.

Area ...	...	9,543 Acres
Inhabited Houses :	1940	4,495
	1941	4,495
	1942	4,495
Rateable Value :	1940	£70,711
	1941	£69,776
	1942	£67,741
Product of Penny Rate :	1940 ...	£249 11s. 4d.
	1941 ...	£252 6s. 0d.
	1942 ...	£243 4s. 1d.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

I have pleasure in reporting that the district has been free from any serious epidemic, and that generally the health of the population has been good. Apart from an epidemic of Measles of a mild type, the number of infectious cases were very low.

Diphtheria cases were well below the average and in my opinion this is partly due to the Immunisation Scheme. All figures pertaining to the health of the district will be found in the tables given on the following pages.

There has been a considerable increase in overcrowding owing to war conditions. Many wives have returned to the district to live with relatives, whilst their husbands are serving in the Forces, this together with the number of War Workers who have come to the district is causing a great need for more houses.

It is very difficult to forecast what the actual housing needs of the district will be after the war, but so far as can be judged at the present time another 500 houses seem to be the minimum that will be required to relieve overcrowding and to rehouse people from unfit houses. This will have to be dealt with as soon as conditions permit.

About one quarter of the number of Evacuees received were left in the district at the end of the Year.

There has been no serious diseases among the Evacuee Children, and I am of the opinion that they are generally better in health since

they have been evacuated. Abercarn House has been very useful for housing children who for various reasons were unfit for billets.

Some of the Evacuees suffered from Scabies and Impetigo and these were sent to a special Hostel set up to deal with these diseases.

With regard to Tuberculosis, in common with other districts there has been an increase in the number of new cases reported. The number of deaths from the disease remained about the average. No doubt the extra strain in war-time is a contributory cause of the increase in new cases.

Tables in the following pages show the age groups affected also the number that were admitted to Sanatoria.

VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTHS.

Live Births—				1942	1941	1940	1939
Legitimate	...	...	...	323	310	323	268
Illegitimate	...	...	...	10	9	10	11
Total	...	...	...	333	319	333	279
Male	...	...	...	172	178	173	145
Female	...	...	...	161	141	160	134
Total	...	...	...	333	319	333	279

Live Birth Rate—

Abercarn	...	...	...	18.5	15.2	18.36	15.21
----------	-----	-----	-----	------	------	-------	-------

Stillbirths—

Legitimate	...	...	...	8	11	15	8
Illegitimate	...	...	...	8	—	1	—
Total	...	...	...	8	11	16	8

Stillbirth Rate per 1,000 of the population—

Abercarn	...	...	...	0.44	0.61	0.88	0.43
----------	-----	-----	-----	------	------	------	------

DEATHS.

				1942	1941	1940	1939
Males	...	...	...	126	125	155	124
Females	...	...	...	95	83	119	93
Total	...	...	...	221	208	274	217

Death Rate per 1,000 of the population—

Abercarn	...	...	...	11.7	11.2	15.11	11.84
----------	-----	-----	-----	------	------	-------	-------

CAUSES OF DEATH DURING 1942.

			M.	F.
1941		ALL CAUSES	126	95
1	1	Cerebro Spinal Meningitis	2	—
7	2	Tuberculosis (Pulmonary)	10	7
2	3	Tuberculosis (Non Pulmonary)	1	—
2	4	Cancer (Uterus)	—	2
5	5	Cancer Stomach and Duodenum)	6	2
2	6	Cancer (Breast)	—	2
6	7	Cancer (Other Sites)	5	1
2	8	Diabetes	1	1
—	9	Intra. Cran. Vasc. Lesions	1	—
76	10	Heart Disease	45	27
13	11	Disease of Circulation	8	10
—	12	Colitis	—	1
3	13	Bronchitis	4	4
24	14	Pneumonia	7	9
6	15	Premature Birth	1	1
4	16	Road Accidents	2	—
—	17	Mining Accidents	4	—
13	18	Other Accidents	2	1
3	19	Suicide	1	1
—	20	Blood Poisoning	3	1
—	21	Senility	11	3
—	22	Appendicitis	1	2
5	23	Nephritis	—	—
—	24	Hydatid Cysts	1	—
—	25	Tubercular Meningitis	1	—
—	26	Infantile Disease	4	8
—	27	Child Birth	—	3
—	28	Encephalitis Lethargica	—	2
—	29	Paralysis	1	1
21	30	Other Causes	4	6

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

Number of deaths under one year:

	1942	1941	1940	1939
Boys	9	14	20	11
Girls	11	8	17	9

Number of Live Births:

1942	1941	1940	1939
333	319	333	279

The causes of infant deaths at various ages are as shown below :—

		Weeks.				Months.				Total
		1	2	3	4	3	6	9	12	
Premature Birth	...	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Debility	...	1	1	2	1	1	2	—	—	8
Convulsions	...	—	—	—	—	2	—	1	1	4
Pneumonia	...	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	3
Syncope	...	2	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	3
		6	1	2	1	4	2	2	2	20

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply.

The water supply is good and an adequate supply is maintained throughout the year by the Abertillery and District Water Board. There are a few farms and cottages in outlying parts of the area which have to draw their supplies from springs and wells.

Drainage and Sewerage.

There has been no extension of Sewers in the District during the year. Inspection of existing Sewers is regularly carried out, and defects are remedied as speedily as possible. Numerous defects have been discovered in the Crumlin district, and these are continually being repaired.

The Sewer serving the Trinant district has broken out at the Navigation Tip, Crumlin. This leakage is a good distance away from any dwelling house and can only be a nuisance to persons passing the spot.

It is hoped that repairs can be effected at an early date.

Rainfall.

Recorded at the Abercarn Cemetery.

Height above Sea Level ... 592.9 feet.

	1942	1941	1940	1939
Total depth ...	57.12	50.62	53.91	61.82

Scavenging.

This service is carried out by two Contractors. Some disorganisation of the services has occurred owing to labour shortage.

Indiscriminate tipping on open spaces has increased considerably since the War—this being due to the shortage of receptacles, and also to so many housewives now working.

Salvage.

The streets are very much cleaner since waste paper is being

collected, and the efficient collection of tins, bones, etc., will help to keep the district free from P.H. Nuisances.

Swimming Pool.

There is one Swimming Pool owned by the Council. This Pool is conducted very satisfactorily and the water is continually filtered. It has proved a very useful asset to the district.

Schools.

The sanitary conditions and water supply at the Schools are satisfactory.

Inspections are frequently made, and defects are reported to the Education Authority.

Pentwynmawr School was disinfected by the County Sanitary Inspector at the request of the Headmaster. It was not found necessary to close any of the Schools owing to epidemic of Infectious Diseases during the year.

Rat Destruction.

Continual war is being waged against these pests. The Rat Catcher uses poison baits and ferrets. Refuse tips, Sewers, and the river banks are visited, and complaints from private householders are promptly dealt with.

Mining Subsidence.

Subsidence still continues to give trouble in the Crumlin Area, and several houses have had to have extensive repairs done to them. Constant watch is being kept on a few houses that might become unfit for habitation owing to this trouble.

Evacuation.

There has been a great all round reduction in the number of Evacuees remaining in the district.

The general health of the Evacuee population has been good. The Hostel has been useful for accommodating children who have proved to be difficult in their billets.

Scabies appears to be declining.

HOUSING.

Owing to war-time restrictions repairs have been difficult to deal with, but with persuasion a large number of houses have received substantial repairs.

The tabulated figures will show the number of houses dealt with :—

Number of Dwelling-houses erected during the year :

By the Council Nil

By private enterprise Nil

The following statement is in the form prescribed by the Ministry :—

1.—Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the Year :—

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	...	...	...	...	...	165
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	...						197
(2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	...						Nil
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for habitation	...	...	...				63

2.—Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of Formal Notices :—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	...	...	...	...	...	...	122
---	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

3.—Action under Statutory Powers during the Year :—

(a) Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	...	...				41
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—						
(a) By Owners	...	...	...	...	...	36
(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners	...					1

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts :	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	Nil
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—	
(a) By Owners	24
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners ...	Nil

(c) Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	Nil
(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	2
(d) Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :	
(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	Nil
(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	Nil

4.—Housing Act, 1936—Part IV—Overcrowding :—

(a) (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year		41
(ii) Number of families dwelling therein		49
(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein		302
(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year		17
(c) (i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year		2
(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases ...		16
(d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding ...		Nil

INSPECTION OF MEAT.

Carcases Inspected and Condemned.

All fresh English Meat is slaughtered at Brynmawr for sale in the Council's area.

Five sheep injured on the Railway were examined and condemned owing to excessive bruising.

Inspection of Other Foods.

Apart from the inspection of meat at the Butchers' Shops much attention has been paid to Food Inspection in general, and the following shows the variety of foods inspected:—

29½ lbs. Bacon.	58 lbs. Butter.
30 lbs. Sugar.	244 lbs. Fresh Fish.
1 lb. Lard.	2½ lb. Margarine.
110 lbs. Cheese.	62 lbs. Flour.
40 lbs. Split Peas.	56 lbs. Corned Beef.
358 lbs. Condensed Milk.	17 cwt. Rolled Oats.
254 lbs. Pork Luncheon Meat.	34 lbs. Spam.
7 lbs. Tongue.	5 lb. Tin Steak.
110 lbs. Tomatoes.	20 lbs. Brisket Beef.
9 lbs. Carrots.	6 lb. Peas.
14 lbs. Soups.	11 lbs. Tinned Beans.
2 Tins Fruit.	100 lbs. Corn Flakes.
9 Tins Sardines.	3 Tins Salmon.
39 lbs. Sausage.	10 lbs. Luncheon Sausage.
2 lbs. Lemon Cheese.	25 cwt. Potatoes.
9 Jars Pickles.	

FRIED FISH SHOPS

There are nine Fried Fish Shops in the Council's Area, and they are inspected regularly by the Sanitary Inspector for cleanliness and fitness for the production of Food.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk Supply.

Retail Purveyors	...	...	...	...	...	48
Wholesale Purveyors	...	...	...	...	...	14
Milk Shops	...	...	...	...	...	4

The Farms are regularly inspected for defects in the Cowsheds and Cooling Rooms. Roadside samples are taken at intervals for Bacteriological and Chemical Analysis.

During the year forty-two samples were taken, eleven were unsatisfactory. The persons concerned were warned that unless they improved their methods of production, appropriate action would be taken against them.

Bakehouses.

All the Bakehouses in the district were inspected during the year and in one cases the Occupier was asked to carry out lime-washing.

Slaughterhouses.

Slaughterhouses are all out of use except for one at Abercarn, where pigs are slaughtered for cottagers.

Licensed Slaughtermen.

Nineteen Licences are in force in the district.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

I am glad to report that again there has been no serious epidemics during the year. Diphtheria shows a marked decrease and in no case had the child been previously immunised.

An epidemic of Measles of a very mild type occurred, but there were no fatal results.

Notifiable Diseases During 1942.

1941					Total Cases Notified	Total Admitted Hospital	Total Deaths
—	Smallpox	...	...	...	—	—	—
27	Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	5	—	—
27	Diphtheria	...	...	...	10	6	—
—	Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)				—	—	—
—	Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	—	—	—
24	Pneumonia	...	...	...	26	—	16
—	Pneumonia Influenza	...	...	...	—	—	—
22	Tuberculosis	...	...	...	34	—	18
—	Erysipelas	...	...	...	2	—	—
—	Enceph. Lethargica	...	...	...	—	—	—
6	Cerebro Spinal Fever	...	...	...	3	—	2
—	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	...	2	—	—
14	Chicken Pox	...	...	...	—	—	—
271	Measles	...	...	...	115	—	—
20	Whooping Cough	...	...	...	20	—	—
—	Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	—	—	—
—	Meningitis	...	...	...	1	—	1
					218	6	37
1940					410	37	46
1941					414	23	36

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality in 1942.

Age Groups	New Cases				Deaths				Recovered	
	Pulmonary		Non Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non Pulmonary			
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	1	—
10	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
15	—	—	—	—	2	2	—	—	—	—
20	2	4	1	—	1	—	—	—	3	—
25	—	5	1	1	—	1	—	—	1	—
35	4	1	—	—	2	2	—	—	—	2
45	1	1	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	—
50	2	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
60	4	1	—	—	3	1	—	—	—	—
Total New Cases	13	12	4	3	6	5	—	—	5	2
Old Cases	6	15	5	14	5	3	—	—	—	—
Total ...	19	27	9	17	11	8	—	—	5	2

SUMMARY.

	1942	1941	1940	1939
New Cases ...	32	22	33	21
Deaths ...	19	11	19	11
Recovered ...	7	—	—	—

Admitted to Sanatoria ... 20

Total number of cases on Register at 31-12-1942 :—

Pulmonary ...	46
Non-Pulmonary ...	26

ACUTE RESPIRATORY DISEASES. DEATHS.

	1942	1941	1940	1939
Bronchitis ...	8	3	28	17
Pneumonia ...	16	18	20	22
Other Forms ...	2	5	5	3
Total Deaths ...	26	26	53	44

CANCER. DEATHS.

			1942	1941	1940	1939
Males	...	...	11	6	7	9
Females	...	...	7	9	4	10
Total Deaths	...	...	18	15	11	19

Scarlet Fever.

Five cases were reported against twenty-seven reported last year.

Measles.

Measles were prevalent in an epidemic form at the beginning of the year, the cases were mild and no serious complications occurred. 115 cases were reported compared with 271 last year.

Analysis of Cases Notified—In Age Groups.

		Under 1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65	65	Total
Diphtheria	...	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	1	2	—	—	—	10
Scarlet Fever	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
Enteric Fever	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pneumonia	...	1	3	1	1	—	—	1	3	2	5	4	5	26
Puerperal Fever	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cerebro Spinal Fever	...	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	3
Acute Poliomyelitis	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Enceph. Lethargica	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dysentery	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ophthalmia	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Neonatorium	...	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Erysipelas	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	2
Measles	...	16	28	21	32	13	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	115
Meningitis	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Tuberculosis	...	—	—	—	4	4	5	4	3	4	4	6	—	34
Whooping Cough	...	—	5	4	5	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20
Chicken Pox	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	...	19	38	27	45	24	13	10	7	10	9	10	6	218
1941	...	22	35	54	42	61	125	29	22	12	10	13	3	428
1940	...	11	28	32	36	57	191	17	6	22	5	5	—	410

NUMBER OF CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED DURING PAST FOUR YEARS.

	1942	1941	1940	1939
Small Pox	—	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	5	27	24	16
Diphtheria	10	27	19	16
Enteric Fever	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Sepsis	—	—	3	—
Pneumonia	26	41	8	7
Meningitis	1	—	2	—
Measles	115	271	315	2
Tuberculosis	34	21	33	21
Erysipelas	2	—	1	1
Enceph. Lethargica	—	—	—	—
Cerebro Spinal Fever	3	6	5	5
Ophthalmia Neonatorium	2	—	—	—
Para-Typhoid	—	—	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	—	—	—	—
Whooping Cough	20	20	—	—
Chicken Pox	—	—	—	—
Total	218	414	410	68

J. DUNLOP, M.B., F.R.C.S. (Ed.),

Medical Officer of Health.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT.

Mr. Chairman, Madam, and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the Year 1942.

Housing.

The repair and re-conditioning of houses found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation has been carried out as far as possible without serious trouble. In a few cases the Owners have held out various excuses, such as, shortage of materials and labour, but only in the case of five houses have we failed to have the repairs completed, and in these cases I think that persuasion will prevail.

Overcrowding.

Overcrowding has considerably increased during the year. This has occurred by families returning to live with relatives during their husbands absence in H.M. Forces. Several cases were relieved during the year, particulars of these will be found in the table.

Complaints.

One hundred and twenty-two (122) complaints of defects were received. Every complaint is thoroughly investigated no matter how trivial it may appear, for often upon enquiries being made into the trivial matter, a major defect or nuisance is found that requires immediate attention.

In many cases the necessary work was carried out as the result of a verbal request.

Supervision of Council Houses.

The supervision of Council Houses is primarily concerned with the maintenance and general cleanliness by the tenants, and the detection and eradication of vermin. In this connection over 200 visits were made during 1942.

Scavenging.

Scavenging is carried out by two Contractors who make three collections weekly in all, except the outlying parts of the District. Much irregular dumping of household refuse has taken place on open spaces in various parts of the district, and despite personal visits and letters to surrounding houses, the practice continues.

Lack of proper receptacles appears to be one of the causes.

Drainage.

The drainage of the district is attended to immediately anything

is found to be defective, and all faults discovered are rectified. Subsidence caused some trouble in the northern area.

Rag Flock Act, 1911 and 1928.

There are only two premises where Rag Flock is normally sold. No samples have been taken for examination during the year.

I found upon a visit of inspection at a Grocer's Shop that there was Rag Flock for sale, and as the Flock appeared to be clean no sample was taken.

Rats and Mice Destruction Act, 1919.

In many cases of rat infestation, it has been found that the ingress of rats into buildings has been by means of defective drains and broken balloons. Where these defects have been located and repaired, it is rare that a second complaint is received. The Rat Catcher visits all Council property upon complaint and makes routine visits to Council Houses and Refuse Tips.

Shops Act, 1934.

The Shops Act, 1934, is an Act which makes provision for the health and comfort of workers in wholesale and retail shops, and warehouses. It is the duty of the Sanitary Authority for every District, as part of their duties under the Public Health Act, to enforce the provisions of this Act which relate to the ventilation, heating, and Sanitary Conveniences of these premises.

The only fault found during various inspections was that the temperature of the shops were very low in winter, and Oil Stoves were supplied upon request in two cases.

Food Inspection.

The tables show the amount of Food which was condemned at various Food Premises.

Visits have been paid to Fried Fish Shops in the District.

The provision of suitable receptacles for the storage of refuse has received attention.

Meat Inspection is carried out systematically at all Butchers' Shops. The meat is first inspected at the Brynmawr Depôt if fresh killed.

In the case of Imported Meat a percentage is inspected at the port of entry, and is again inspected at the Butchers' Shops. No meat was found to be unfit for consumption at the Local Shops during the year.

Cowsheds, Dairies, Milk Shops, and Milk Vendors.

The milk supply of the district receives very close attention, and under this heading 74 inspections were made to premises where milk is produced, or stored.

There is only one Store from which milk is distributed wholesale, and it has been suggested to the Occupier of this Store that the provision of a Sterilizer would be necessary for the proper cleansing of his utensils. One is now on order and will be installed as soon as it is received.

No Milk Sellers are licensed for milk of Special Designation:—"Tuberculin Tested," "Accredited," "Pasteurised," "Tubercular Tested (Certified) Milk."

Forty samples were taken for Bacteriological and Chemical Examination. Five samples were found to be unsatisfactory. Letters of warning were sent to the Sellers in each case, and subsequent samples showed an improvement.

Bakehouses.

The number of Bakehouses on the Register is eleven; nearly all are of good construction, and on the whole are kept in a good sanitary condition. In one case only was it found necessary to call attention to the need of Whitewashing.

I. JENKINS,

Sanitary Inspector.